

**DOWNTOWN/CAPITOL CENTRAL CORRIDOR
TASK FORCE
JULY 25, 2006**

MEETING NOTES

Task Force

Members Present: Michael Noble, Craig Lien, Larry Englund, Diane Thormodsgard, Ta-coumba Aiken, Paul Mohrbacher, Kristina Smitten, Susan Rani, Pat Lamb, Mike Burns, Phil Mason, Rhys Ledger

Guests Present: Sheila Lynch, Paul Mandell, Joe Spencer, Marcus Young, Sarah Penman, Tim Griffin

Staff Present: Lucy Thompson, Allen Lovejoy, Jess Rosenfeld

Welcome

Co-chair Kristina Smitten welcomed the task force members and thanked them for volunteering for this very important effort.

Charge to the Task Force

Lucy Thompson, Senior Planner with the Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development, reviewed the role of the task force in advising City staff and its consultants on preparation of a broad vision and development strategy for the Central Corridor. The Planning Commission has set up two task forces for this effort: one task force will explore the portion of the corridor from the western city limits through the Dale Street station (University Avenue Task Force), and the other task force will explore the portion of the corridor from the Rice Street station to Union Depot (Downtown/Capitol Task Force). Both task forces will deal with land use and development adjacent to the LRT line (outside the rail bed), not with technical issues related to construction of the line itself.

Thompson noted that notebooks are being provided for all task force members to keep material organized. Additional materials will be provided over the course of the task force's work and will be three-hole punched for easy insertion into the notebooks. She urged task force members to review their books, as there is a great deal of background information about the project, neighborhoods adjacent to the stations, relevant City and neighborhood plans, etc.

Introductions

Task force members introduced themselves, and stated their interest in LRT and being on this task force.

Expectations of Members

Co-chairs Kristina Smitten and Paul Mohrbacher reviewed their expectations for the task force, including being on time, using everyone's time wisely, being prepared for each meeting, how often the group can expect to meet, and bringing one's background and expertise to the table (not being an official representative of any one group).

Mohrbacher stressed how important LRT is to the future of downtown, and that this work on a vision/development strategy is an opportunity to shape Saint Paul for many years to come.

Mayor Coleman

Mayor Coleman visited the group to thank everyone for agreeing to serve on this task force. He noted that it is important that people feel they have a stake in the investment we will make with LRT, and that we make the most of it. LRT will transform Saint Paul; it is our #1 opportunity. In downtown, LRT can help address many issues, such as the high office vacancy rate, the need/desire for more housing, and the need to increase activity all hours of the day (but especially at night). The Mayor urged the task force to remember that it is not enough to consider LRT a transit option only; we need to think beyond the physical investment in the rail line to the significant spin-off investment and development that will occur adjacent to it.

Central Corridor LRT: Project Overview

Allen Lovejoy, with the Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development, provided an excellent project overview. The slides from his PowerPoint presentation are included in the task force notebook.

Brainstorming on Key Issues

Task force members were asked to fill out a short questionnaire regarding their vision for the corridor, issues related to LRT and future development along the corridor, and expectations for the task force's work. Task force members then shared their ideas on the three major issues that need to be addressed regarding future land use and development along the corridor and in the neighborhoods adjacent to it with the full group. Once all the issues were up on the wall, each task force member was given three dots for votes for his/her top three issues.

Set Meeting Times

It was agreed that the task force will generally meet the first and third Tuesdays of the month at 4:30 -6:30 p.m. Future meetings include:

Tuesday, August 1 or Wednesday, August 2, 2006, evenings

Special task force input sessions with Urban Strategies, Inc., the City's consultant hired to prepare the Central Corridor Vision and Development Strategy.

Tuesday, August 15, 2006, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Regular task force meeting to review questionnaire responses, present what has occurred along the Hiawatha Corridor since LRT was built, provide an overview of transit-oriented development, and a give an update on the work of the LOCATE task force.

Tuesday, September 5, 2006, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Regular task force meeting. Tentative agenda: bus tour of entire corridor.

Thursday, September 14 –Saturday, September16, 2006, times TBD

Task Force and public open house/workshop events. The Urban Strategies, Inc. consulting team will present their initial analysis of the Central Corridor and a compilation of community input received to-date. There will be a visioning session with the task force, as well as a public open house on Saturday, September 16, 2006, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at the Rondo Library, among other events.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.